

Americas, Human Rights Award from the Bahai Community of Ventura County, Cruz Reynoso Award of the American Bar Association of Los Angeles County, and Community Hero Award from the Ventura County Diversity Board.

Studs Terkel devoted a chapter to her in his book *Coming of Age*, and Debra Sands Miller did the same in her book *Independent Women*. Her oral history has been recorded for posterity by the UCLA Research Library.

Mr. Speaker, I have been a strong supporter of Interface Children Family Services for more than twenty years. The work of the organization and its volunteers has bettered the lives of countless families in my community. I know my colleagues will join me in congratulating Alice McGrath for the honor she so richly deserves and thank her for decades of helping others.

#### REFORM OF THE 1872 MINING LAW

**HON. JOSEPH M. HOEFFEL**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 13, 2000*

Mr. HOEFFEL. Mr. Speaker, last week the Budget Committee held a hearing on my legislation H.R. 3221, the Corporate Welfare Commission Act. The Committee heard testimony from several witnesses including members of Congress about the most egregious examples of unnecessary and wasteful subsidies to industry. While members of Congress have mixed feelings about many of the items other members consider corporate welfare, there is virtual unanimity in the belief that the 1872 Mining Law needs reform.

The 1872 Mining Law was enacted to promote mineral exploration and development on federal lands in the western United States and to encourage settlers to move west. This law granted free access to individuals and corporations to prospect for minerals on public lands. Once a discovery was made, they were allowed to stake a claim on the deposit.

The law works this way:

Once the prospector does some exploration work on public land, he may stake a claim on an area that he believes to contain a valuable mineral. The price of holding such a claim is \$100 per claim per year.

If the prospector spends at least \$500 on development work on the parcel and the claimed mineral deposit is determined to be economically recoverable, the claim holder may file a patent application for the title to surface and mineral rights.

If the application is approved, the claimant may purchase surface and mineral rights for between \$2.50 and \$5.00 an acre. These amounts have not been adjusted since 1872.

There is no limit on the number of claims a person can locate, nor is there a requirement that mineral production ever commence.

And as if this policy were not bad enough, the 1872 Mining Law lets mining companies extract the minerals without paying a royalty. This is unlike all other resources taken from public lands. For example, oil, gas and coal industries operating on the public lands pay a 12.5 percent royalty on gross income of the operation. On tribal lands, the average royalty paid for copper was 13 percent. In the private sector, gold royalties range from 5 to 18 percent.

As an unnecessary subsidy, this policy should have been reformed long ago. But the harm of this policy does not end with wasteful government support for the mining industry. Once the land has been exploited, the environmental damage is the additional price that taxpayers are forced to pay. Over the past century, irresponsible mining operators have devastated over half a million acres of land through carelessness and abandoned mines. According to the EPA, waste from mining operations has polluted more than 12,000 miles of our nations waterways and 180,000 acres of lakes and reservoirs.

My amendment to the FY 2001 Interior Appropriations Bill, which was rejected by the Rules Committee, would impose a 5 percent royalty on all hard rock minerals mined from public lands. The funds generated from the royalty would be devoted entirely to environmental cleanup of these mining sites. The amendment would also make the current one year moratorium on the issuance of mining patents permanent (the current moratorium has been extended each year over the past five years).

Mr. Speaker, this policy is in need of repair and reform. I am disappointed that the Rules Committee did not allow for House consideration of my amendment. I will continue to work with my colleagues to reform this outdated and wasteful policy.

HONORING MS. VALERIE  
BEASCOCHEA

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 13, 2000*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize the accomplishments of an outstanding student, Valerie Beascochea. Her sharp mind and strong work ethic recently won her the high distinction of being named the United States National Collegiate Award winner in Nursing. In addition, Valerie will appear in the United States Achievement Academy Official Collegiate Yearbook in recognition of her academic performance, interest and aptitude, leadership qualities, responsibilities, enthusiasm, citizenship, attitude, motivation to learn and dependability.

What makes these accomplishments even more remarkable is that Valerie is a wife and a mother of two. Her ability to successfully juggle the rigors of school, work and family underscores the significance of these outstanding achievements. She is a model that other students should follow and one that will be sure to achieve great things for the good of our community. She has proven to be an asset to her school, community, state and nation.

It is with this, Mr. Speaker, that I say congratulations to Valerie Beascochea on a truly exceptional accomplishment. Due to her dedicated service and integrity, it is clear that Colorado is a better place. We are all proud of Valerie.

HAILING GENERAL SERRANO, VAL-  
IANT DRUG FIGHTER AND  
GREAT FRIEND OF THE UNITED  
STATES

**HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 13, 2000*

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, today I praise General Rosso Jose Serrano on his retirement as head of the Colombian National Police (CNP) as a valiant drug fighter and great friend of the United States. He will be hard to replace.

General Serrano saved countless American families from the nightmare of drug addiction. For this, we owe him a debt of gratitude.

In his nearly 40 years as a policeman in Colombia, General Serrano has fought corruption and drug traffickers and made the CNP the model of Latin American police agencies. Through his tireless and selfless leadership, General Serrano won the support of the Colombian people and the world for his valiant police officers, more than 5,000 of whom have died in the last 10 years in Colombia's drug-financed civil war.

General Serrano destroyed the powerful Medellin and Cali drug cartels. When finally provided with the Black Hawk utility helicopters, Serrano's CNP officers began inflicting massive damage on narco-terrorists, producing significant results in destroying cocaine labs and reducing opium and coca leaf crops.

I invite our colleagues to join in wishing General Serrano and his family our sincerest best wishes for a long, happy, and healthy retirement. We hope that he will continue to serve the international community by sharing his years of expertise through such institutions as the planned International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) for the Americas.

RECOGNITION OF CARMEN  
SCIALABBA

**HON. JOHN P. MURTHA**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, June 13, 2000*

Mr. MURTHA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to share with my colleagues the attached newspaper article describing an achievement award recently bestowed upon a long-time member of my staff, Carmen Scialabba, by his high school alma mater. It is a fitting tribute to an extraordinary individual and I hope you will take the time to read it.

Many of you recognize or have gotten to know Carmen over the 24 years he has worked with me. He is a patient and tireless attendee of appropriations hearings and mark-ups and has been absolutely indispensable in his role as Associate Staff, handling all manner of appropriations-related issues as well as a wide array of constituent services. He has been an indispensable aide, conceiving numerous economic development projects with me and overseeing them to their fruition, to the benefit of countless workers and families back home in Pennsylvania.

Many of you probably do now know, however, the heroic story of how Carmen Scialabba has overcome the harshest adversities, beginning in his early childhood when the